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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 20/1/2024

Subsidy out, Parliament canteen fare costlier from Budget session

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

^{20/1/24}
New Delhi: Lawmakers and visitors will have to shell out more for food at the Parliament canteen when the House meets for the budget session starting January 29 with the food subsidy being completely done away with. All MPs will have to undergo RT-PCR tests while question hour will be back. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who met officials from various departments to take stock of preparations for the budget session, said, "Parliament canteen will now be run by ITDC in

place of Northern Railway." The subsidised food in Parliament canteen is available to MPs, journalists and visitors and some dishes served there are particularly popular.

According to Parliament sources, the Lok Sabha secretariat can save more than Rs 8 crore per annum with the subsidy coming to an end. The issue was discussed on several occasions but the subsidy continued as efforts to withdraw it drew opposition.

Birla said all arrangements would be made as per Covid-19 protocols for the forthcoming session. He said

Rajya Sabha will sit from 9 am to 2 pm and Lok Sabha from 4-8 pm during.

The vaccination protocol finalised by the Centre will apply to parliamentarians as well. "RT-PCR tests will be held in Parliament premises on January 27-28. arrangements will also be made for RT-PCR tests of families and staff members of MPs," the Speaker said. Officials told Birla that all Covid-related standard operating procedures that were evolved during the last session shall continue with suitable modifications as per requirements.